V. DRUZHININ

SOVIET ESTONIA

A SURVEY

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
Moscow 1953

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THE STORMY BALTIC

THE WIND blows from the west, driving the foam-crested waves before it.

On the sea-shore, breasting the storm, stands a high hill.

On that hill, according to legend, the giant Kalev, the ancestor of the Estonian people, lies buried. There Linda, Kalev's wife, mourned his death, and her tears glisten to this day in Lake Ülemistejärv, which lies not far from the hill. There, too, lived their son, the giant Kalevipoeg, who with one hand could tear up a mighty oak by the roots. Ancient epics record the brave deeds performed by Kalevipoeg, who knew no fear in fighting the enemies of his homeland.

Around the grey hill, on the summit of which stands an ancient fortress, factory hooters echo one another.

On the highest of the fortress towers flutters a scarlet flag.

The animated streets of a big city run down to the sea-shore. That is the city of Tallinn, the capital of Soviet Estonia.

* * *

At 60° north latitude, the Soviet coast of the Baltic Sea forms a peninsula. On the north it is washed by the Gulf of Finland and on the south-west by the Gulf of Riga.

Further westward lies the Moonsundi Archipelago, a group of islands of fantastic shape, separated from each other and from the mainland by narrow straits.

Prominent among them are two big islands—Saaremaa and Hiiumaa.

The peninsula and the islands comprise the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic.

To the east, on the border between Estonia and the R.S.F.S.R., stretch the smooth waters of Lake Peipsi Järv (Lake Chud) and Lake Pskov. On the south, the Estonian Soviet Republic adjoins Soviet Latvia.

To cross the republic from one end to the other by train takes less than twenty-four hours. It has an area of only 45,000 square kilometres, which, however, is one and a half times that of Belgium.

The traveller who enters Estonia by land will not see any important changes in the surrounding landscape. He will see the same quiet, slightly undulating plain, the dark fir thickets in the damp hollows, and small winding rivers running through low valleys.

Estonia is the extreme end of the great Russian Plain; here the plain slopes gently westward to the sea.

The islands, too, differ little from the mainland; they are just as flat, with low, sloping shores.

At a first glance the northern coast of the Baltic region seems dreary and monotonous; it does not reveal its beauty at once. But if examined more closely, picturesque spots will reveal themselves to the eye: a low hill all covered with wild flowers; and next to it another hill, taller than the first. On its summit runs a line of trees which comes to a sudden stop at the brow, as if afraid to descend. A belt of sparsely growing birch-trees girding a field; a mill standing in a clump of willows; an aspen-tree on the bank of a stream, its bright trembling leaves flashing like silvery lights.

In the south-east of Estonia, where the land rises perceptibly, the eye is attracted by

a chain of high hills. Prominent among them is Munamägi, "egg mountain," the highest point in the republic; it rises 317 metres above sea-level.

The northern extreme of Estonia is also somewhat elevated. There, on the coast of the Gulf of Finland, there are big outcrops of grey limestone forming steep cliffs. That is the so-called "glint." Now overhanging the water, and now retreating inland, this "glint" stretches far beyond Estonia to the suburbs of Leningrad.

Rising as high as fifty metres, split and worn by wind and water, the "glint" cliffs assume fantastic shapes. Looking at them from the sea it seems as though the turbulent waves are pounding the foundations of ruined ancient buildings. Some of the "glint" cliffs stand out distinctly against a background of pine forests.

Through the whole of the middle part of Estonia runs a belt of lowlands. Here trees are more sparse and stunted; it seems as though they are being sucked in by the yellow, swampy ground. Here and there patches of dry land are seen, with houses and cultivated fields; but the further south-west you go, the wider are the marshes.

Through marshes, between swampy banks, the river Pärnu, an important river in Estonia, runs to the Gulf of Riga. It is fed by innumerable small tributaries, which run out of the lakes.

In Estonia there are over fifteen hundred lakes. They occupy five per cent of the area of the republic. Marshes occupy about eighteen per cent.

Gazing at the Estonian landscape one can read as in a book what took place here thousands and millions of years ago. The "glint" ledges, the outcrops of limestone that are found everywhere, show that the sea was here in the distant past; for, as is known, limestone, a light, porous stone, was formed out of the shells of innumerable generations of crustacea which inhabit the sea.

Vestiges of the glacial period are distinctly visible in Estonia. In that period gigantic masses of ice moved down from the north across the Russian Plain and also covered the Baltic region, which by that time had been freed from the sea. The ice carried down lumps of rock torn from the Scandinavian mountains, grinding them up in the process. Meanwhile the climate changed. It became warmer, the glaciers melted, retreated to the north, leav-

ing on the plains boulders and accumulations of sand and shingle. That accounts for the boulders found in the fields and for the hills of Estonia.

While retreating, the ice was held for a long time in the deep hollow of the Baltic Sea. As long as the sea was occupied by the ice the streams of water on the land were unable to flow into it, and so they spread in the hollows dug by the ice, and also in those places where the glacier had filled the river-beds with masses of sand and had formed dams. That accounts for the numerous lakes that are scattered over the whole of the north-western part of the Soviet Union.

But why did not the water flow into the sea when the glacier melted?

Because of the dams formed by the glacier, and also because of the flatness of the country, which hindered the flow of the water.

CROSS-ROADS OF THE WINDS

We find much that is interesting when examining the flora of Estonia. As is the case in the whole of the middle zone of the Russian Plain, here mixed forests predominate, forests in which, in addition to fir and pine, there are birch, aspen, linden, and in some places oak and maple. In those forests we can find, side by side with northern fir covered with hoary clumps of lichen, small trees with bright, soft, fleshy needles on their flexible branches. These are yew-trees, close kinsmen of the yew-trees that grow in the Crimea and in the Caucasus.

And another surprising thing. The trunks of the mighty oak-trees are entwined with thick and tightly clinging ivy, just as they are in the forests in the south.

It seems as though north and south have met on the Baltic coast. How is this meeting

to be explained? How do the green inhabitants of the south manage to survive here? Who tends them?

The sea.

The Baltic Sea is part of the World Ocean. As is known, in the winter water cools much more slowly than the land; it retains the summer heat longer. Even the big lakes have a moderating effect upon the climate on the coast. It is easy to understand, then, what a tremendous preserver of heat the ocean is. The air that comes from the Atlantic greatly moderates the continental climate of the middle zone of the country, it reduces the cold in winter and the heat in summer. It goes without saying that the breath of the ocean is felt more markedly in those places that are nearest to it.

Thus, whereas the mean January temperature in Vologda is 14° C below zero, in Tallinn, which is in the same latitude, the mean temperature is 3° C below zero. On the Estonian islands the winter is even milder.

It is clear now why southern plants survive the winter here.

Often, in Estonia, there is no snow at New Year. The sledge-driving season is short, and the sledge roads are unreliable.

The ice near the coast is usually thin and some parts of the sea here are navigable all the year round. And yet, at this season, on the Caspian Sea near Astrakhan, two thousand kilometres to the south-east, there is a thick coat of ice that lasts three or four months.

Estonia suffers from dampness rather than from cold. During a half of December fog descends on the land. The coast of the Gulf of Riga is one of the dampest places on the Russian Plain. The rainfall here is over 600 mm per annum. Thus, if all the moisture that comes down in the form of rain and snow in the course of a year were retained on the surface, the land would be covered by water more than half a metre deep.

The weather is changeable here, however. The air from the regions that have a sharply continental climate invades these parts and drives the rain clouds away in the summer, and in the winter brings intense frost to replace the thaw. Those winds come either from the Arctic tundras or from the south-eastern steppes. The Baltic region is the cross-roads of the winds.

The wind blows with tremendous force on the coast, raising not only the waves of the sea,

but also waves of sand. They pile up the sand on the sea-shore into large dunes. Those dunes seem to be motionless, but actually, the force of the storms pushes them inland, where they threaten the fields and roads. They move at the rate of two or three metres a year. In many places along the coast trees have been planted to check the movement of the sand.

THE KALEV TRIBE

THE ESTONIANS number a little over a million. Their ancestors settled in the Baltic region in very ancient times.

Who were the ancestors of the present-day Estonians? We are reminded of them by the name of Lake Chud (Lake Peipsi Järv). Their ancestors were the Chuds, old neighbours and allies of the Russian people. The Chuds were one of the tribes that were united in the Kiev State and took part in its struggles against foreign invaders.

In the ancient chronicles we read: "And the Slavs, the Krivichi, the Merya, and the Chuds, rose up against the Varangians and drove them beyond the sea."

The mysterious city of Ledenets mentioned by the chroniclers is none other than Lindanisa, the capital of the ancient Ests that stood on the site of the present city of Tallinn. Its harbour was visited by ships from Novgorod and

other commercial cities. The Estonian folk-songs describe how Lindanisa was built. The hero Kalevipoeg, son of Kalev and Linda, went to Pskov to obtain timber and carried it across Lake Peipsi Järv.

From the Russians the Estonians learned how to build houses and forts, and they also learned various handicrafts. From ancient Rūs they obtained articles of metal and wood, including agricultural and weaving implements. This is proved by such words of Russian origin in the Estonian language as: "vabadus"—"svoboda"; "raamat"—"gramota"; "sirp"—"serp"; "värten"—"vereteno"; "määr"—"mera"; "saabas"—"sapog"; "turg—"torg"; "sahk"—"sokha".*

With the help of the Russian people the Estonians created their culture and defended their native land against enemies. The Russians and the Estonians had common enemies who came from the west, over the sea. From the west came the Varangians, and later the German Knights of the Livonian Order.

The poem about Kalevipoeg tells us about the "ironclad warriors" who landed from

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* Freedom; book; sickle; spindle; measure; boot; trade; wooden plough.

ships, about the bloody "chariot of war" which rolled across the country. Kalevipoeg sounded his horn, calling the Estonians to battle.

In 1219, the city of Lindanisa was destroyed by the Knights of the Livonian Order who, on its ruins, built the fortress which stands to this day on the hill in the Estonian capital.

Russian detachments came to the aid of the Ests, and under the command of Prince Vyachko the allies heroically defended the city of Yuryev—the present-day city of Tartu.

In 1242 Alexander Nevsky defeated the German knights in the battle on the ice on Lake Peipsi Järv and checked their advance to the east; but the Baltic region remained under the foreign yoke and was separated from Rūs.

The conquerors intensified feudal oppression in the country. Most of the land in Estonia was distributed among the German knights.

More than once the Estonians rose in revolt against the conquerors. The biggest revolt was that which started on St. George's day, April 23, 1343, and spread over nearly the whole of Estonia. The peasants set fire to the castles of the German knights and inflicted a number of serious defeats upon the enemy. The knights resorted to a ruse. They enticed

the leaders of the revolt into their camp, ostensibly for the purpose of conducting negotiations, and there cruelly tortured them to death. The revolt was drowned in blood.

The poem about Kalevipoeg ends with a description of how the enemy captured the hero by deceit and chained him to a rock. But the last lines of the poem breathe hope for the future: Kalevipoeg will escape from captivity and return to his people.

That dream of a brighter future sustained the Estonian people during many long years of suffering and privation.

The Knights of the Livonian Order were defeated by the Russian Tsar Ivan Grozny, but their place was taken by other conquerors—the Swedes.

In the Northern War of 1700-1721, Peter the First defeated the Swedes, and the Baltic region was rejoined to Russia.

Again the destiny of the Estonian people became closely bound up with that of Russia. Shoulder to shoulder with the Russian toilers they fought for a better future against the tyranny of the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists.

In Estonia the landlords were the German barons, the descendants of the Knights of the

Livonian Order, who had retained possession of their lands and manors. The barons ruthlessly exploited the peasants. The tsarist government supported the landlords and sent troops to punish the peasants when the rebelled against their exploiters.

"The peasants are strongly resisting the military detachments in the endeavour to escape from slavery. Death does not daunt them. Many of them have been shot; the wounded refuse to have their wounds bandaged, preferring death to a return to slavery," wrote the Russian dramatist D. I. Fonvizin who toured the northern part of the Baltic region in 1784.

The industrial development in Russia was accompanied by the growth of the working class in towns. The Estland Gubernia, near St. Petersburg, became one of the most industrially developed gubernias in tsarist Russia. The anger of the proletarians against the factory-owners grew and found expression in the strikes that began to break out in Narva and other places since the 1870's.

In 1901, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, exiled by the tsarist government, arrived in Reval, as Tallinn was called then, and went to work as a fitter at the locomotive repair works.

In a room furnished with an iron bedstead and a table loaded with books, workers and students would gather at night. Those were the first Marxist circles organized in Estonia by M. I. Kalinin. In his reminiscences of the work he conducted in Tallinn, Mikhail Ivanovich wrote:

"We made preparations to issue a leaflet in the Estonian language... The roller for the printing-press was made at my lodgings. The material for it was melted; my two basement rooms ... were filled with smoke. At the crucial moment, when the material was being poured into the mould, a gendarme appeared. The door was locked, of course. In an instant everything was cleared away; the tools were hidden under the bed; we had already lit the stove to account for the smoke. It turned out, however, that the gendarme had come to hand me a notice or an order of some sort. I had to chat with him for a while, complaining to him about the inconveniences of basement dwellings, about the constant smell and smoke that came from heaven knows where. Meanwhile, behind the partition, which did not reach the ceiling, the workers were waiting to hear their fate. When the gendarme left, the young men, delighted with their own courage, rejoiced

at the fact that we had not roused the suspicion of the Cerberus. The roller came out well and a few days later the leaflet in the Estonian language appeared."

Came the revolution of 1905. The Reval workers unanimously supported the workers of St. Petersburg and Moscow in the struggle against the tsarist autocracy.

The proletarians of Reval were a reliable support of the Bolshevik Party in the days of the Great October Revolution.

In Reval there were stationed army units which obeyed the bourgeois Provisional Government. Lenin and Stalin set the Estonian Red Guard the task of preventing the dispatch of those units to Petrograd.

The Estonian Red Guard was commanded by Victor Kingisepp, the son of a blacksmith from Saaremaa Island, who had received his revolutionary training in Petrograd.

In fraternal unity with the proletarians of Petrograd, Moscow and other towns in Russia, the Estonian workers also overthrew the rule of the exploiters.

Soon after, however, Estonia was occupied by German troops; but in spite of the atrocities committed by the invaders, and in spite of the white terror, the fight for Soviet rule continued.

In November 1918, the Soviets were restored, but this time, too, Soviet rule was short-lived in Estonia. It was overthrown by the united forces of the foreign interventionists and the Estonian landlords, factory-owners and kulaks.

Soviet Russia was completely surrounded by enemies.

In 1919, the Estonian bourgeoisie, supported by the American and British interventionists and by Finnish, Swedish and Danish mercenaries, succeeded in crushing the revolution. The British and American imperialists had assigned £ 10,000,000 for the purpose of suppressing the revolution in Estonia.

OUTSIDE THE SOVIET BORDER

For nearly twenty-one years a barbed-wire fence separated the Estonian people from the Soviet Land.

During those years great changes took place in the life of the people in the Soviet Union, and the very face of the country was changed. Under the guidance of the Communist Party a powerful industry and advanced collective farming were created. The map of the U.S.S.R. changed rapidly. Every now and again, as is the case now, new towns, electric power stations, canals, mines and newly discovered deposits of mineral wealth had to be marked on the map.

Outside the Soviet border, in bourgeois Estonia, things were entirely different. There it seemed as though time had come to a stop. The old map did not have to be altered; nothing was added, neither towns nor seaports.

Factories and works were not enlarged; on the contrary, they became deserted. Big engi-

neering plants were closed or reduced to the state of small workshops for making spoons, nails, and even bird-cages. The number of workers employed in the metal and textile industries was reduced to half.

In 1940, the Soviet Union was already producing twelve times the quantity of manufactured goods produced in tsarist Russia, but bourgeois Estonia was producing less than what was produced under tsarism.

What was the cause of this decline?

Cut off from the Land of Socialism, the small country fell into the clutches of the foreign imperialists, who practically transformed it into their colony.

True, on the map, Estonia was marked off by a thick frontier line and was called "independent," but actually it was not independent.

Concerning the fate of the Baltic countries, V. I. Lenin said: "... in a country like that, the British ambassador carries more weight than the king or parliament."

As soon as the capitalists and landlords captured power in Estonia with the aid of foreign bayonets, the British and American interventionists became the bosses of the country. Chief of the United States Military Mis-

sion in the Baltic region demanded that he be given forthwith nothing more nor less than a list of all the inhabitants of town and country, a list of all the inhabited centres, and a most detailed map of the country.

The British and American imperialists bought up the wealth of Estonia, forced loans on usurious terms upon her, and subordinated the economy of the country to their own interests. It was not in their interest to revive the country's industry because they wanted to keep it as a market for their own goods. As a result, many factories which had formerly produced goods for the extensive Russian market came to a standstill. The imperialists would agree to buy in Estonia only agricultural produce, such as hides, butter, pork and flax, and then only at a low price. Estonia became an agricultural appendage of the imperialist powers.

Placed in power by the imperialists, the bourgeois rulers of Estonia, without the slightest qualms of conscience, sold the country to foreigners and increased their own capital. Meanwhile, the working people suffered extreme want. Unemployment increased.

Every day advertisements like the following appeared in the newspapers:

"Dear gentlemen, have pity and give a poor girl employment. I am in sore need."

"A young man who knows three languages begs to be given employment, no matter of what kind. Situation desperate."

"Chemical engineer wants a job."

The despair to which unemployment had reduced people can be seen from the following newspaper report:

"Narva, October 4. The Rakvere-Paide Assize Court today tried the case of 25-year-old Varvara Säkki, charged with the murder of her child. Taking into consideration the murderess' frank confession, the court sentenced Varvara Säkki to twelve years' penal servitude. The defendant stated in court that she had been driven to commit murder by want. Having a child, she was unable to get work."

There was much suffering in the countryside. Most of the land was owned by kulaks, and it was the best land. Many thousands of poor peasants toiled on miserable plots. They had no horses with which to uproot tree stumps and plough their land, and no money with which to buy seed and fertilizer. They had to borrow those from the kulaks and so fell into bondage to them.

Crushed by debt, the peasants often had to give up their children to the kulaks. The children were taken to market like slaves and offered for next to nothing as shepherds, nurses and domestic servants. In the newspapers of that time we can read descriptions like the following of those atrocious transactions:

"A dark-eyed girl, about twelve years of age, clings timidly to a poorly dressed woman.

" 'Sixty krones for a chit like that?' exclaims a prospective buyer in surprise.

" 'What if she is a chit? Last year she tended ten cows.'

" 'Take thirty krones.'

" 'Thirty? I have been offered thirty-five.' "

The oppressors were not content with ruining Estonia. They plunged the people into a still worse disaster—the disaster of war.

At that time the American billionaires were intensively arming Hitler Germany. Behind the backs of the people the rulers of Estonia conducted negotiations with the Hitlerites with a view to allowing German troops to enter the country. Estonian fascist gangs similar to the German were organized.

Having in mind the common interests of defence of the two countries, the Soviet Union

offered to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance with Estonia. The bourgeois rulers of Estonia were obliged to accept the offer to avoid exposing their real intentions.

In conformity with the treaty signed on September 28, 1939, Soviet troops arrived in Estonia and were joyously welcomed by the working people.

The Estonian hangers-on of the imperialists did not, however, abandon their perfidious plans; they continued their secret negotiations with the Hitlerites and prepared for war against the U.S.S.R.

In June 1940, the Government of the Soviet Union published a note exposing the criminal designs of the rulers of Estonia.

The Estonian people became convinced that their rulers were dragging the country into war. Louder and louder voices were raised against the warmongers and exploiters. The masses poured into the streets demanding the establishment of a people's government. At the head of the masses were the proletarians of Tallinn who had fought shoulder to shoulder with the Russian workers in the Great October Socialist Revolution.

That fighting alliance was still intact. For twenty-one years the enemies had tried to sub-

due the Estonian working class and to destroy its Communist Party. Fascist terror was introduced, the workers' organizations were dispersed, revolutionaries were shot, or flung into prison; but nothing could break the will and determination of the Estonian Bolsheviks. In 1922, the enemies executed Victor Kingisepp; they drowned the proletarian insurrection of 1924 in blood; but new fighters took the place of those who fell. They were inspired by the stars of the Kremlin that shone across the border. Thousands repeated the last words Kingisepp uttered as he faced the rifles of the firing squad: "Long live the Estonian Soviet Republic!" At last, the long-awaited day arrived.

The insurgent people overthrew the clique of oppressors. New parliamentary elections were held. The new parliament, in obedience to the will of the people, passed a decision to restore Soviet rule in Estonia and to request the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to accept Estonia into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

That took place on July 21, 1940.

July 21, the birthday of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, became an annual national holiday.

SOCIALIST ESTONIA

THE ESTONIAN people drove out the capitalists and became the masters of the wealth of their country—the factories and mills, the land and the mines. In the very first year of Soviet rule unemployment vanished. Industrial output increased 60 per cent. The factories which had come to a standstill under the rule of the Estonian and foreign exploiters began to function again. In the rural districts the age-long dream of the peasants came true: 700,000 hectares of land were taken from the kulaks and other exploiters and distributed among the toilers. Twenty-seven machine and tractor stations were set up. The first collective farms were organized.

But at the very beginning of its existence a great disaster befell the Estonian Soviet Republic; it was invaded by the Hitler aggressors who, on June 22, 1941, perfidiously at-

tacked the Soviet Union. The Hitlerites plundered Estonia, wrecked her economy and exterminated or drove into slavery tens of thousands of her citizens.

In the autumn of 1944 Estonia was liberated by the Soviet Army, in which there was an Estonian National Guards Corps. With the aid of the Russian people, and of the other fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union, Estonia rose out of the ashes and ruins.

The post-war (fourth) five-year plan was Estonia's first five-year plan. It was carried out ahead of time. By 1951, Soviet Estonia was producing 3.4 times as much manufactured goods as was produced before the war.

Nearly all the peasant farms had united in collective farms. Under the rule of the capitalists, Estonia was a poverty-stricken agricultural country, an appendage of the imperialist powers. Present-day Estonia is an industrial and collective-farm Socialist Republic, an equal member of the mighty Soviet Union.

In Estonia, too, the socialist system was victorious. Here, too, the great truth proclaimed by the Communist Party triumphed. Only under the leadership of the Communist Party and within the mighty family of Soviet

republics did Estonia find real independence and a new, joyous life.

In the course of a few years great and happy changes took place in little Estonia, such as she had not experienced throughout her long history extending over many centuries, changes which testified to the mighty, life-creating power of the Soviet system and to the gigantic successes that can be achieved by free labour.

We shall see those successes everywhere—in town and country, in the capital, and on the smallest island far off the coast. We shall see how the face of the country is changing; how the old towns are growing and new ones are being built; how the land is being revived and made to produce unprecedented harvests.

The people, too, have changed. Liberated from slavery, proud of their strength, they are working with joy and are confidently looking forward to the future. Their attitude towards work has changed. Under the rule of the capitalists work was hard and burdensome, but today it is a matter of honour, valour and heroism. The socialist system has reared tens of thousands of Stakhanovites and scores of Heroes of Socialist Labour.

The Estonian people could not, of course, have brought about those vast changes solely

by their own efforts. In a letter addressed to J. V. Stalin, published in *Pravda* on July 22, 1950, the Estonian people wrote:

"The successes achieved in building the new socialist life, the rapid growth of the national economy and culture of Soviet Estonia, are a living and vivid illustration of fraternal solidarity and mutual aid, an illustration of the invincible strength of the Lenin-Stalin friendship of the Soviet peoples. All the Union Republics are like brothers sharing their wealth with Estonia and helping her quickly to develop all branches of her national economy and culture."

A STROLL THROUGH TALLINN

THE FIRST thing that strikes the eye on approaching Tallinn is a hill crowned by a fort.

Distinctly outlined against the sky stands the tower known as "Tall Herman," on the top of which flies a red flag.

And rearing to the sky is the 140-metre spire of Olai Church, which has been towering over Tallinn for seven centuries.

The nearer we get the more distinctly we discern the battlemented walls and steep tiled roofs of the ancient city. The new districts spreading at the foot of the hill are still hidden from us by woods.

The railway station. Towering above it is the hill, like a steep, rocky cliff with bastions clinging to the edge of the precipice. At the foot of the hill there is a garden in which stands a statue of J. V. Stalin.

We walk down a street in the ancient part of the city. Rounding Vyshgorod, it leads down to the sea. It is a narrow and winding street,

but still narrower are the side-streets that run into it, so narrow that a lorry can barely pass through them. But there is plenty of room for the pigeons of which there is a multitude in the Estonian capital. They do not fly away on our approach, but calmly and unhurriedly get out of our way.

Side by side with modern three- and four-storey buildings stand mediaeval buildings with steep roofs and narrow windows.

We reach the Town Hall where once foreign burgomasters held sway. The staples and rings to which condemned persons were publicly chained still hang from the wall.

The street brings us to a gate cut in a thick wall overgrown with shrubs. These are the remains of the fortifications that once protected the lower part of Tallinn.

But further on there is nothing to remind us of the Middle Ages.

We are in a wide, animated square, in the middle of which stands the massive building of a theatre.

Tram-cars run through the square with clanging bells. Here, too, is the stopping place for the long-distance motor buses which link Tallinn with its suburbs, and with many towns in the republic.

Where shall we go now? We cannot be in Tallinn and not visit the palace of Peter the First. It is situated in Kadriorg Park on the sea-shore. Dense avenues of linden-trees lead down to the sea-shore, from which one gets a splendid view of the bay and of the islands looming on the horizon.

On the shore there is a stone pedestal on which there is a winged statue pointing to the sea. That is a monument to the Russian warship *Rusalka* which sank with all hands during a fierce storm in 1893. The inhabitants of the city were greatly moved by this tragedy and they collected money for the erection of the monument.

In tsarist times the workers used to assemble at that monument on May Day and from there march with flags to the centre of the city.

From one side of the park stretches a fine beach with boating and yachting stations; this is a favourite haunt of the inhabitants in the summer. On the other side the park adjoins the port and the factory districts of the city.

In a street on the outskirts we shall be shown a wooden house with an attic in which Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin lived.

The red-brick walls of factory buildings stretch into the distance. Here Kalinin and his friends once conducted revolutionary activities and spread the ideas of Bolshevism.

Here and there between the buildings we catch glimpses of the blue bay, of wharves and ship-masts. A bracing sea breeze is blowing.

The old factories have been rejuvenated. The shops never teemed with life and activity as they are doing now.

Estonia's industry was pulled out of its state of stagnation in the very first year of the existence of the Soviet regime and began to develop at a rapid rate. It was severely damaged by the Hitlerites during the war, but it revived and expanded during the fourth five-year plan period. The fifth five-year plan for the development of the U.S.S.R. in 1951-1955 provides for a further extensive development of Estonia's industry. Gross industrial output is to increase about 70 per cent. Special attention is being paid to the expansion of shipbuilding and electrical engineering. The production of electric power is to be more than doubled. For the Estonian people, as for all peoples of the Soviet Union, the fulfilment of

the fifth five-year plan will be a big step to communism.

The factories hum with the sound of machines sent from Moscow, Leningrad and the Urals. And the workers of Tallinn are proudly making their contribution to the great work of construction. The Stalingrad, Kuibyshev and other huge hydro-electric power stations now in course of erection will be furnished with motors made at the Volta Works in Tallinn.

It is interesting to see how those motors are made. An operator pulls a switch and sets a whole line of machines in motion. Those machines themselves, without the aid of human hand, cut, bore and plane. A belt carries the parts from one machine to another for the different operations and finally places the finished part on the inspector's table. Those lines of automatic machines are the latest product of Soviet engineering.

Estonian furniture-makers have long been known as highly-skilled craftsmen, and much of the furniture for the gigantic University building erected in 1952 on the Lenin Hills in Moscow was made in Tallinn.

The list of articles made in Tallinn is a long one. Here are built machines for extract-

ing oil shale and peat, of which there is an abundance in Estonia, and equipment for draining marshes. Woollen and silk textiles and fishing nets are also manufactured.

A number of factories use timber for their raw material. Paper is made from conifers; aspen, which grows abundantly in the republic, goes to the match factory. Aspen is the most suitable wood for making matches; it is viscous and is easily cut into sticks for the matches and into thin strips for the matchboxes.

The fast yachts that are built in Tallinn are famous. Many kinds of wood go to make up their light, graceful hulls—not only oak, fir and pine obtained in the republic, but also Siberian larch. The wood is thoroughly seasoned for three years. In working up the material fine precision is needed; if a millimetre too much or too little is taken off, the yacht may lose precious minutes in the yacht races, which, by the by, are very popular in Tallinn.

Other articles manufactured in Tallinn are radio sets, pianos, perfumes, knit goods, canned fish and meat, and chocolate.

Tallinn is not only a big industrial centre, but also an important seaport. The Baltic ports, which are ice-free nearly all the year

round, are of great importance for the Soviet Union, and among them Tallinn occupies a prominent place.

In the past, dock labouring was back-breaking work. All day long men trod the gangways bent almost double under the loads they carried. The port-owners found it cheaper to hire human labour than to put up cranes and transporter belts. Things are different in the Soviet port. Cargoes are handled by machines.

Tallinn is growing and expanding. The ancient legend has it that if the sound of axe and hammer ceased in Tallinn the city would perish, it would be flooded. There is much folk wisdom in that legend, for when the capitalists ruled, and stagnation set in, Tallinn did almost perish; it sank to the level of a backward provincial town. At the present time it is flourishing; new dwellings and factories equipped with the most up-to-date machinery are going up everywhere.

The Hitler invaders wrecked nearly half the dwellings in the city. Today new houses are springing up on the site of the old ruins. New streets are running through the city to its outskirts, which were formerly waste ground and refuse dumps. The houses, with snow-white fa-

çades and wide windows, are striking examples of Soviet architecture.

The centre of Tallinn is now ornamented by the magnificent building of the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian S.S.R. Near it is a statue of V. I. Lenin.

Schools and colleges are being built. In bourgeois Tallinn about a thousand students attended college; they were the sons of factory-owners, government officials and kulaks. In Soviet Tallinn over 4,000 youths and girls attend the Polytechnical Institute, the Conservatory, the Pedagogical Institute, and other institutes. They are the sons and daughters of the working people of Estonia, for whom the road to education is wide open.

The reading rooms at the Public Library of the republic are always full. The library has a stock of over half a million books.

That is how ancient Tallinn has changed.

Life has also changed in the other cities of Estonia. They are much smaller than Tallinn, but the traveller will find much that is interesting in them. Let us first go to Narva, the textile city.

NARVA

The city stands on the river Narova, near the place at which it falls into the Gulf of Finland. Two ancient forts stand opposite each other, one on each bank. On the right bank stands the mighty fort of Ivangorod, spacious, in the Russian style, a splendid example of the art of building possessed by our ancestors. The whole of it, with its eleven towers and high walls, was built in one summer by command of Ivan the Third (1462-1505). On the left bank stands the castle of the Knights of the Livonian Order. The two forts are silent witnesses to the age-long struggle Russia waged against the western conquerors.

Between the fortress walls the river Narova surges, swift and foaming.

But why is there foam on the water? Why does the Narova here resemble a turbulent mountain river? Because higher up it sweeps

over rapids consisting of layers of limestone—the "glint" we have already mentioned—and forms a waterfall. The sound of the falling water is heard in the streets of the city.

Many times the water of the Narova was stained with blood spilt in battle. Several kilometres from Narva spreads the undulating Yoala Field bordered by coppices. Here, in 1700, Peter the First fought his first battle with the Swedes.

A little over two centuries later the young Red Army forces received their baptism of fire here. From Narva and Pskov they went out to meet the German aggressors, who were pushing towards Petrograd, and defeated them. That was on February 23, 1918. That glorious victory was the first won by the Soviet armed forces. Since then February 23 has been celebrated by the entire Soviet people as the birthday of the Soviet Army.

Near Narva fierce battles were fought against the Hitlerites. In 1944, when the Soviet forces routed the fascists near Leningrad and were driving the remnants of their divisions westward, Hitler boasted that he would hold the Baltic region no matter what happened. The German newspapers reported that an iron barrier had been erected on the Narova, which

the Bolsheviks would never breach. But all the concrete the fascists had piled up here was simply wasted. Nothing could stop the Soviet warriors.

The small detachment which first crossed the Narova repulsed fourteen enemy attacks. In his report to regimental headquarters the commander of the detachment said: "The bridge-head on the west bank has been occupied. We have sworn to die rather than yield a metre of ground to the enemy."

For three months the enemy tried by means of continuous attacks to hurl back the Soviet forces which were crossing the river, but in vain. In the rear of the advancing Soviet troops scores of kilometres of corduroy road were laid across impassable marshland for the purpose of bringing up guns, shells and provisions.

The rout of the Hitlerites at Narva was of tremendous importance for the liberation of the Baltic region.

When the Soviet forces entered Narva there was not a single building left intact. The Hitlerites had wrecked the city.

Present-day Narva is a new city rising out of ruins. It is to be a better city than the old one—such is the decision of the architects and

builders. And indeed, beautiful, many-storeyed houses, such as old, pre-war Narva had never seen, are rising on the banks of the Narova.

Narva has again become the Estonian calico city. Here are situated the Krenholm Mills, one of the largest textile mills in Europe.

The hum of the machines mingles with the noise of the waterfall swirling right under the factory windows. The weaving sheds are equipped with up-to-date Soviet looms, the best in the world, and yet in the recent past, in 1940, there were looms here that were made in ... 1840!

From the mills we can pass over the suspension-bridge to the new workers' settlement.

The restoration of the bridge called for truly heroic efforts. The bridge hangs almost over the waterfall. One false step meant death in the rushing, swirling stream. Among the daring ones who helped to restore the bridge were young women weavers who self-sacrificingly devoted their efforts to the task of reviving their native city and its factory. Many of them have since distinguished themselves by their Stakhanovite work at their looms and are now celebrities in the new Narva.

By the end of the fourth five-year plan period the Krenholm Mills were already turning

out much more cotton cloth than before the war. Narva calico is sold in all parts of the Soviet Union.

During the fifth five-year plan period the output of cotton goods in Estonia is to be increased 230 per cent. The output of the Krenholm Mills, which are to be reconstructed, will also be considerably increased.

A huge hydro-electric power station will be built in Narva by the end of the fifth five-year plan period.

TARTU

The streets of Tartu run up the sloping banks of the river Emajõgi and end at a thick wood.

Emajõgi means mother-river. According to ancient legend, near this river there was a grove in which Vanemuine, the god of song, sang and enchanted all living things with his voice and the sound of his harp.

Founded in 1030 by Prince Yaroslav, Tartu (formerly Yuryev) is today the second largest city in Estonia. It is known chiefly as a city of learning.

Conspicuous among the low buildings of the city there is one, a massive structure with snow-white columns. That is the University. Adjoining it are the buildings of scientific institutes, clinics and students' hostels. On one of the terraces of the river valley rises the spire of the Observatory. The streets are thronged with students.

The Tartu University was founded in 1802 and is the oldest seat of culture in Estonia. Here worked one of the founders of Estonian literature, F. E. Kreizvald, who collected the popular legends about Vanemuine, about Kalev and his hero son, and out of them composed the national poem *Kalevipoeg*.

The work of the Estonian writers and scientists was influenced by the advanced people of Russia. In Tartu the works of Pushkin, Gogol and Tolstoy were translated into the Estonian language.

The poet Zhukovsky lived in Tartu. One of the professors at the University was the distinguished Russian astronomer Struve, and among the graduates were the celebrated Russian writers Grigorovich and Veresayev, and the famous surgeons Pirogov and Burdenko.

The present Tartu University, restored and enlarged after the war, is continuing the glorious traditions of the past. It is further promoting Soviet science in close collaboration with the scientists of Moscow, Leningrad and the other centres of culture in the Soviet Union. Every year hundreds of doctors, linguists, mathematicians, lawyers and natural scientists graduate from its nine departments.

On leaving the University the graduates do not have to roam about seeking employment as was the case in the past, in bourgeois Estonia. Work is waiting for them in all branches of the ever-growing economy and culture of our country.

After the war the Estonian Academy of Agriculture was set up in Tartu. In addition to the State University and the Academy of Agriculture, there are in Tartu a Teachers' Institute and five technical schools.

Tartu is not only a city of learning, it is also an industrial city. Since the war its industry has grown considerably, and it is of a very diverse kind. Here they produce agricultural machines, leather, bacon, sports equipment, and the fish caught in Lake Peipsi Järv is canned here. Furthermore, Tartu is a big river port.

PÄRNU

One side of Pärnu faces the Gulf of Riga and the other side faces the river Pärnu, which here falls into the sea. Approaching the city from the sea one sees the golden sandy beach, the luxuriant green park stretching along the shore, and here and there among the foliage one gets glimpses of red tiled roofs. Above the trees rise the smoke-stacks of the fish cannery.

In the park, among the spreading maple- and linden-trees, there is a bronze statue of a woman mounted on a rough-hewn rock pedestal. The pedestal bears the inscription: "Lydia Koidula. 1843-1886."

Lydia Koidula was a famous Estonian poetess whose poems expressed her love of her people and her confidence in their strength.

The house in which Lydia Koidula lived still stands in Pärnu. It is now a museum bearing her name. Here visitors can see the

poetess' flap-topped writing-desk, her quill pens, and the manuscripts of the plays she wrote. Those plays were performed at amateur theatricals. Custom prevented women from appearing on the stage, but the situation was saved by Lydia's brothers who acted the female parts of her plays.

Before Estonia became a Soviet country Pärnu was a sleepy provincial town. It became somewhat animated in the summer, in the bathing season, when rich idlers flocked to the sea-side.

Life in Soviet Pärnu is entirely different. The place of the small tan-yard has been taken by a large leather works equipped with up-to-date machines. There is now a fish cannery here—the largest in the republic.

Pärnu is now an animated fishing port to which hundreds of fishing boats bring their catch. There is a large sawmill here, a tannery and factories where furniture and skis are made.

Pärnu is the finest sea-side place in Estonia, her principal health resort.

In the U.S.S.R. the right to rest is guaranteed by the Constitution and it is enjoyed by all workers, manual and mental, who receive annual paid vacations of not less than two

weeks, which can be spent at any of the numerous sanatoria and rest homes available for the working people.

Care for the health and rest of the people is one of the main tasks fulfilled by the Communist Party and the Soviet government. In Soviet Estonia a fundamental change was brought about in the field of public health. Bourgeois Estonia was an agricultural country, but there were no hospitals for the rural population.

Most of the medical institutions were in private hands. Medical treatment was costly, and this practically deprived the working population of the possibility of obtaining medical assistance.

Since Estonia became a Soviet country the number of hospitals has increased more than threefold. A network of rural hospitals has been set up. In 1951 there were 77 rural hospitals with accommodation for 827 patients.

For the first time in the history of Estonia peasants are able to receive medical assistance free of charge.

In 1951 there were children's hospitals in Estonia with accommodation for 900 patients. In bourgeois Estonia there was hospital accommodation for only 25 child patients. Eight

permanent and eighteen seasonal children's sanatoria have been established. The assignments for the protection of public health in Estonia amount to about 200,000,000 rubles per annum.

The sanatoria in Pärnu receive many visitors every summer. People come here from the towns and collective farms in Estonia and Latvia, and also from Leningrad and Moscow. Medical mud treatment, the fine sandy beach, the sea lapping gently in the windless bay and the odour of the pine-woods have all made Pärnu famous as a sea-side resort.

* * *

Next to Tallinn, Pärnu, Tartu and Narva are the largest of the old cities of Estonia. Of the others we shall mention Haapsalu, Võru, Viljandi and Valga.

Haapsalu is a quiet sea-side town. Here the great composer P. I. Chaikovsky used to spend his holidays.

In the park on the sea-shore, on the spot where the composer was fond of sitting, there is a stone bench with a memorial plaque.

Võru is in the south-east of Estonia. Its streets run down a hill to the shore of a lake. In the town there is the house in which

F. E. Kreizvald was born and lived. It is now a museum dedicated to that writer.

Viljandi, in the south of the republic, is situated among picturesque hills. Viljandi means "grain-bearer." The land around the town is the most fertile in Estonia. In the town there are butter factories, flour mills and a match factory.

Valga is a railway junction right on the border of Latvia. Part of it lies in the Latvian S.S.R.

The small towns of Estonia, formerly scarcely distinguishable from villages, are now developing together with the whole of the republic. Industrial enterprises are springing up in them and they are becoming centres for the exploitation of the natural wealth of the country.

The centres of teeming life in Estonia, however, are the new towns which sprang up in the period of the fourth five-year plan.

THE "ESTONIAN DONBAS"

THE TRAIN dashes past thickets of sombre fir- and pine-trees. Suddenly the scene changes and factory and snow-white city buildings appear.

We are in Kohtla-Järve, a town that was not on the old maps, a new, socialist town. At the entrance to it stands a sculptural group of miners.

In this city there is not a building more than six years old. It is dotted with small parks and gardens ornamented with fountains. The apartment houses are fitted with baths, hot water, gas and electric light.

Not far from Kohtla-Järve other towns are rapidly springing up. Comfortable two-storey houses with tiled roofs, wide windows, verandas and balconies, brightly lit streets, the hooting of automobiles—and all this where quite recently only the rustle of pine-trees and the hooting of owls were heard.

Why were these towns built in the forests of North Estonia?

What are the occupations of the people who have come to live here?

The chief occupation here is mining. No matter what road you take out of the town it will lead you to a mine; you will see minehead machinery and a dirt dump. There is much here that reminds you of the Donbas, but you do not see a bit of coal.

Here a different kind of valuable mineral fuel is mined—shale.

Shale is the chief mineral in Estonia, and shale mining is her chief industry. That explains the rapid development of the "Estonian Donbas"—the new mining district which stretches tens of kilometres.

Shale is a hard, light-brown rock; at a first glance you would not think it could serve as fuel.

The story is told of a peasant who, long ago, built a stove in his hut with slabs of shale. When he lit the stove he found to his horror that the stove burned together with the firewood.

How was this shale formed?

In very remote times the area of what is now the "Estonian Donbas" was covered by the

sea. In the sea grew masses of small aquatic plants. As the plants perished their remains carpeted the sea-bed, where they rotted and formed silt.

In the course of time the layer of silt grew thicker and more dense.

The same thing happened as what we see in a shallow backwater green with slime. That is the beginning of the formation of shale.

Time passed. The silt underwent various changes. It got mixed with sand and clay; sea-shells dropped into it and decomposed there. The sea retreated, the bed was laid bare, wind and floods covered it with another layer of earth. Under its weight the silt hardened, became compressed and sank into the depths of the earth. The shale that is being mined today contains the remains of plants which lived hundreds of millions of years ago.

The shale deposits in Estonia are immense.

In some places the shale lies near the surface, but those are rare. In most places it has to be dug from under the ground.

The first mine shafts were sunk in 1916 on the advice of the Russian geologist N. F. Pogrebov who had explored the shale deposits.

Later, this mineral wealth of Estonia fell into the hands of foreign capitalists. A British

firm which owned many mines in Estonia bore the high-sounding name of "Gold-fields." Heavy was the toil of the miners in these "gold-fields" which brought fat profits for their owners. In the dingy, suffocating mines the slabs of shale were cut with picks and loaded on to horse-drawn tubs by hand. The agents of the British firm deliberately hindered the mechanization of the mines, for why should they spend money on machines when hundreds of men were standing at the gates willing to work for a mere pittance?

The work is entirely different in the Soviet shale mines.

Let us go to one of them. At the entrance to the mine we are given a pair of rubber boots, a tarpaulin coat and trousers, a hard leather cap and a lamp. Without these nobody is allowed to go underground. One would think that we were about to wade through mud and water and grope in the dark. But our apprehensions are groundless. The gallery which slopes down to the shale is well-lit and dry.

Extracting the shale, the miners have pushed many kilometres under the ground. Rows of lamps hanging from the roof run into the distance, forming a thin chain of light. The truck

rails glisten. The air is fresh and cool: powerful fans keep it circulating.

We walk along the main gallery. Every now and again it is crossed by transverse galleries. Some have given up all they contained; these are dark and deserted. Others are ablaze with light. The switch-man at a cross-roads pulls a lever. A rumble behind us grows louder and a train of trucks rolls past us. The wretched, blind pit ponies have gone. The train of thirty empty, clanging, rattling trucks that rushes past us is drawn by an electric locomotive.

We reach the end of the gallery and come up with the train that passed us. It cannot go any farther. We turn down a side-gallery and find ourselves at the shale face, the fighting line of the miners who are cutting into the rocky seam.

Here it is lighter than in the main gallery. Gas contained in glass tubes gives light almost equal to daylight. Those lamps are the latest technical invention, and they have been fitted up in the mines to protect the workers' eyesight.

In the heading the light is particularly bright. It looks as though the sunlight has been caught and imprisoned in a cave. For all

that, every miner has a lamp in case of accidents; but standing against the wall they look dim, unable to compete with the artificial daylight.

Should underground water begin to flow into the heading the miner has no fear of wetting his feet, he has the rubber boots to protect them. The roof is firmly propped, but if fragments do drop between the props they cannot injure the miner; his head is protected by the hard leather cap. In short, everything is done to protect the health and to ensure the safety of the miners.

Although the pick is still used in some places, most of the mining is done with the aid of electric cutting-machines. The machine, an oblong metal slab with a band-saw running round the edge, is drawn up to the shale face. The miner pulls a switch and the toothed blade eats into the bottom of the seam, causing sparks to fly. When it has eaten deeply enough into the seam the machine is taken away. With the aid of electric drills holes are bored higher up in the seam. Into the holes charges of explosives are laid. Everybody leaves the heading. A small fierce flame runs up the fuse to the charge.

An explosion! The slabs of shale are shat-

tered. The main thing has been done. All that the miner has to do now is to separate the shale from the limestone with a pick.

So far no machine has been invented to do that. A stroke of the pick, and the fragment is split into two parts. The grey limestone—the product of the shells that once dropped on to the silt on the sea-bed—is cast aside. The light-brown shale is loaded on to the transporter belt and carried to the waiting train. The engine-driver shunts the train to bring each empty truck under the moving transporter belt.

As we walk to the exit the train, now loaded with valuable fuel, passes us again.

Watching these precise, rhythmic operations in the shale mine one realizes the significance of the honourable name of "Estonian Donbas" and the right of this district to that name. The Donbas is the teacher of the Estonian miners and serves as a model for them.

It is regarded as a matter of honour here to work in the Donbas way, not to waste a moment of precious time.

Such is the mine today.

A few years ago this place was pitted with Hitler mine craters and littered with wreckage.

The Hitlerites boasted that they had put Estonia's shale industry out of action for a

long time to come; but during the short period of the fourth five-year plan the "Estonian Donbas" was not only rehabilitated, but expanded beyond recognition.

By 1951 the output of shale had been raised to almost twice as high as that before the war, and the output in bourgeois Estonia came nowhere near the output in present-day Estonia. For example, the *monthly* output of the "Käva" mine is 100 times more today than the *annual* output when the mine belonged to capitalists. The old mines are being enlarged and new mines are being opened. The underground streets and side-streets extend for tens of kilometres.

During the fifth five-year plan period the output of shale is to be increased over 100 per cent. New mines are to be opened. The output of liquid fuel obtained from the shale is to be increased about 80 per cent.

Never have people obtained so much benefit from shale as is obtained from it at the present time under Soviet rule.

Shale is used for fuel in the furnaces of factories, electric power stations and locomotives. It is an excellent substitute for coal. The Donbas coal-fields are two thousand kilometres away from the Baltic. How much labour

and resources it would need to drive train-loads of coal all this distance! This alone shows how important the shale mines of Estonia are for the economy of the country.

But shale is not only burnt as fuel in furnaces. It goes to certain plants where it is used as raw material. Not far from the mines there is a huge plant, built after the war, for the processing of shale. Between the tall buildings there are long viaducts along which transporter belts run. There are rows of auxiliary workshops and garages.

But you will look in vain for the finished product. It is as invisible and as light as air. It cannot be packed in crates or transported in freight cars by railway. The product is gas —combustible shale gas.

MENDELEYEV'S DREAM COMES TRUE

In Leningrad, two hundred kilometres from Kohtla-Järve, the housewife turns the tap of the gas stove, applies a match and a hot blue flame breaks out. In five minutes the kettle is boiling merrily. That is shale gas that comes from Kohtla-Järve, and it performs many services for the Leningrad people.

The dream of the great Russian chemist Mendeleyev (1834-1907) has come true. He said:

"The time will come when the production of gas on a large scale at certain centres and its distribution from there by pipes ... everywhere, in dwelling houses and in factories, will be a great success in domestic life and in industry."

Before the huge plant was erected in Estonia Soviet scientists conducted in their laboratories innumerable experiments with this light-brown rock.

True, the use of gas in towns is not new, but that gas is usually made from coal which has to be transported from the coal-fields, or else natural gas is used, such as is obtained in the Carpathians and in the Volga region.

For the first time the task was set of supplying a big city with gas obtained from shale.

Soviet science fulfilled this task. The place of the small stoves and pipes of the laboratories was taken by a huge gas plant.

In that shale-gas plant there are surprisingly few workers. The pull of a switch sets innumerable machines in motion.

Swift transporter belts carry lumps of shale to the top of a huge building. From there the shale drops into the mouths of stoves. The whole building consists of many hundreds of tall brick stoves in which the temperature reaches 800-900° C. But the shale does not burn, for no air is allowed to enter the stoves. The shale is heated, its organic part disintegrates and gives off gas.

What remains is coke, which is removed from the stoves by transporter belts and fresh shale is dropped in.

Gas has been obtained, but it is still coarse and impure. If it were used in Leningrad in

that state it would corrode the gas-pipes and poison the air.

How is the gas freed from its impurities? How can some parts of this volatile substance be separated from the other parts?

You have no doubt more than once seen the grass get wet from dew in the evening. The moisture comes from the vapour in the air that has settled on it. The shale gas that comes from the stoves gives off pitch vapour. That vapour settles when cooled as water vapour does.

The hot gas from the stoves passes through cooling chambers. To allow the pitch "dew" to settle of its own accord would take a long time; it has to be hurried.

A stream of cold water is turned on to the gas. Yes, it is given a real shower-bath. The water hastens the settling process, washes the drops of pitch out of the gas and carries them away as it flows out of the cooling chamber.

But not all the pitch has been washed away.

From one shower the gas is driven to a second, and then to a third.

The pitch has now been removed and there is no fear that it will choke the gas-pipes.

But the gas is still impure. It contains a harmful substance like hydrogen sulphide. Hydrogen sulphide has a nasty smell, but that is only half the trouble. It is one of the most poisonous substances on earth, and besides that it voraciously eats up metal. One gramme of hydrogen sulphide absorbs two grammes of iron. If the gas were used in that state it would soon destroy the gas-pipes.

To avoid this the gas is washed again, this time with water and "soap," not, of course, the soap we use to wash with, but a special substance which absorbs the hydrogen sulphide and carries it away.

After that shower the gas is passed through a layer of iron ore which extracts whatever hydrogen sulphide has remained.

But that is not all. The gas contains benzine, a valuable substance, but not for gas-pipes. It can only choke the pipes. What "soap" will wash the benzine out of the gas? The gas is forced through a stream of oil of a special kind, which absorbs the benzine.

In the process of being cleaned of pitch, hydrogen sulphide, benzine and other impurities, the gas makes a long journey through the vast gas plant. The liquid with which the gas was washed is, in its turn, cleaned and the sub-

stances it has taken from the gas are extracted from it. These can be used for various purposes. The workers manipulate switches and direct innumerable streams of different substances which meet, react upon one another, part and meet again. At last the complicated process is finished.

The gas is clean.

After washing one must dry oneself. The "towel" used for drying the gas is a substance which absorbs moisture.

The gas is now dry and is ready for use. It is pumped through a pipe-line which runs through forests and marshes from the gas plant to Leningrad.

The people who laid that pipe-line had to wage a stern struggle against the elements.

The story is still told of the heroic welder who on a cold autumn day worked for four hours in a bog mending a hole in the pipe.

And people still remember the men who lowered the pipe to the bottom of the swift-flowing Narova and fixed it there in the depth of winter when the ice had to be blown up with explosives.

The pipe-line is divided into sections and for each section there is an inspector who, day

and night, in snow-storm or rain, keeps close watch over his section.

In Kohtla-Järve a dispatcher is always on duty at the telephone. Every now and again there is a call and the dispatcher hears a voice:

"Gas flowing normally."

"Everything in order."

Those are the reports of the section inspectors. The dispatcher keeps constant watch over the flow of gas. If there is a break-down anywhere, he at once calls for the repair gang.

Leningrad is sure of an uninterrupted supply of gas.

The exploitation of the vast shale deposits of Estonia is one of the most outstanding achievements of Soviet science and engineering. And never has so much been got out of shale as is got out of it in our country at the present time. By the end of 1955 the production of shale gas will have been increased about 120 per cent, and by that time a gas pipeline from Kohtla-Järve to Tallinn will be in operation.

Shale is the chief but not the only kind of natural wealth found in Estonia. The republic has fuel deposits of another kind, namely, peat.

MARSHLANDS

We alight from the train at a small country station. There are many stations like this in Estonia: a lone, whitewashed station building, a bench on the platform, a couple of bicycles leaning against the wall.

After the train ride we want to stretch our legs and deeply to inhale the fresh air of the pine-woods.

A path leads to the outskirts of a wood. As we reach the wood the air becomes raw. There is no wind; the trees are still. In the distance we hear a cuckoo, the sacred bird of the ancient Estonians.

The path leads further on to a hollow and we reach a bog surrounded by trees. It reminds one of a lake; here and there are pools, which at one time were clean and limpid. This was a lake, but it was absorbed by the bog.

The bog is inhabited.

The chief inhabitants are the long-legged storks. They build their nests in trees, or on house roofs, and fly to the bog for food. Catching sight of a frog the stork seizes it with its beak and, throwing back its head, swallows the frog. It also swallows snakes, but first kills them with its sharp beak. Having eaten its fill the stork flies back to its nest and stands on the edge for hours like a sentry. People do not harm storks and they live in the same nests year after year, improving them by adding twigs, moss and often bits of paper, felt, or scraps of wool picked up in the yard.

When four or five voracious young storks are hatched the parents know no rest. From morning to night they scour the bog for food for their young.

Storks are found almost exclusively in the south of Estonia. Much more wide-spread are herons and cranes. They live among the moss and sedge and feed on mice, frogs and small fish. Cranes are particularly numerous in the lowlands. In Estonia, as everywhere in the Soviet Union, the crane is the herald of spring. It arrives from the south early, when the snow in places is still on the ground.

In the autumn the cranes assemble again in couples and fly to the south—to the Black Sea or to the Mediterranean.

Often bitterns are met with in the marshlands of Estonia. These are yellow birds resembling the heron, except that the neck, legs and beak are shorter, which, however, does not lessen their deftness in catching fish and swift lizards. Cautious, timid and fond of seclusion, the bird chooses for nesting the thickest sedge and goes hunting at night, and it is at night that one hears the long-drawn-out cry of the bittern from the bog. In the day-time it stands in its hiding place like a statue, often on one leg. Hunters are amazed at the ability of the bittern to hide and adapt itself to its surroundings. One can pass a couple of paces away from the bird and not notice it.

During the spring floods the bittern builds a raft of reeds and on it builds its nest.

The animal world is poorly represented in the marshlands. Mice, snakes and frogs are the principal representatives. Sometimes an elk may come down from the forest to regale itself on the reeds and marsh willows; or an otter will come fishing in a lake.

But more and more often we meet in the marshes animals which never lived in Estonia

before. These are furred animals reared in nurseries. They are set free in order to breed under natural conditions and so increase the fur wealth of the country.

One of these animals is the ondatra, which resembles the rat. It has a reddish, or a silver-black, very warm fur. Settling on the shore of a muddy lake, it builds itself a house which, from the outside, looks like a mere grass mound. Inside it has two storeys. The top floor is its bedroom, and also its storeroom, where it keeps its stock of food for the winter. From its house to the lake it digs an underground passage. To catch the ondatra a trap must be laid in the water at the mouth of the tunnel.

In the marshes, tempted by the frogs of which they are fond, are also racoon-like dogs, brought here from the animal nurseries in the Urals. They are fat, short-legged animals, with a reddish, bushy fur, which is highly valued.

Many of the animals and birds in the low-lands lead a nocturnal life and hasten to hide at the break of day.

In the day-time the marshes seem to be deserted.

There is something about the marshes that is sinister to man: the treacherous soft swell of

the ground under one's feet, which threatens to break through the mossy carpet at any moment. Menacing to the traveller are the hollows; the dark pools of water collected in them seem to be bottomless. For ages man was compelled to retreat from the marshes, which inexorably spread to the fields and woods, and to build his habitations and cultivate his fields as far away from them as possible. It is not surprising that the ancient Estonian bards described the monster who wanted to kill the giant Kalevipoeg as a denizen of the marshes.

But man was not then aware of the wealth that lay in the marshes, namely, peat.

Peat is useful as fuel, although it does not give as much heat as coal. Like shale, peat supplements coal in the economy of the Soviet Land.

We continue our journey. The road skirts the bog, runs into a wood and then divides. One of the roads leads to a peat-field, but which one? The riddle is solved by the chug of a tractor that is suddenly heard ahead of us. Now we know where to go.

TOOTSI

On the map the area around Tootsi is marked as marshland; but even the latest maps cannot keep pace with the changes brought about in the Soviet Union. Many of the marshes marked on the map no longer exist. In their place smooth, dry, chocolate-coloured plains stretch to the horizon. The peat has been cut and taken away.

In the olden days peat cutting was dirty, exhausting and badly-paid work. Thousands of people toiled in the peat-fields for a mere pittance, cutting, drying and loading the peat.

A peat-field looks entirely different now. At first sight it seems to be deserted. There are workers in it, however, true, only a few, but their strength is mightily enhanced by powerful machines. Some of the men working in the middle of the bog are wearing the gold Stalin Prize badge.

In the very first year after the war the idea arose of mechanizing the work in peat bogs. For that purpose Soviet industry created a number of machines. Tractors from Chelyabinsk and Stalingrad and peat-piling machines from Leningrad, Penza and from the Urals arrived in Tootsi. Those machines needed skilful handling and some of them had to be altered and adapted to the specific requirements of the local peat-fields. Moreover, in order to provide the country with more fuel it was decided to build new types of machines.

Two heads are better than one. A Stakhanovite worker came to the aid of the turf cutter. They were joined by an engineer and later by a scientist interested in bold ideas. Thus, in small, out-of-the-way Tootsi, amidst the woods and moss-grown bogs, a group of inventors was formed.

The collaboration of practical workers and scientists has achieved wonderful results in the Soviet Union, and it did so in Tootsi.

First an excavator is sent into the field. Its steel jaws eat into the ground and pull out great lumps of peat as wet as a sponge, leaving a trench behind. A second and a third trench is cut parallel with the first. The

trenches quickly fill with water and the strips of ground between them become dry. That is how the water is drained from peat—and that is the first task in peat cutting.

After that the ground becomes firmer and tractors go into the field with implements in the shape of big, strong hooks trailing after them. With these, age-old tree stumps and roots, long and slippery like snakes, are pulled up.

Strong, broad ploughshares turn layers of peat grass downwards and the rich, black mould upwards.

After that the field is harrowed and then rolled. Then the peat is loosened and broken up. Each of these operations is performed by special implements hauled by tractors.

The dry, loose peat is now ready to be cleared away. It is impossible, of course, to pile all the peat from a large area in one heap at once. It is first piled in ridges. A machine comes along with a mechanical shovel and a transporter belt. The shovel picks up the peat and transfers it to the belt, which, in its turn, unloads the peat on the side. As the machine moves along, a ridge of peat is formed. But the peat is not yet ready to be carted away. It would be inexpedient to lay rails from each

ridge to the railway. The scores of ridges have to be piled in one heap.

Here the most powerful of the peat machines comes into action, the principal invention of the group we have mentioned, the one they are most proud of.

That machine also has a long transporter belt. It is pushed forward by a tractor. Another implement resembling a screw carries the peat from a ridge and transfers it to the belt, which drops the peat on to the ridge on the right. The ridge on the left disappears, the one on the right grows higher. That is repeated until, at last, one mountain range of peat rises in the flat field ready to be carted away.

An electric railway track with overhead wires is laid to the mountain. Freight trains pull up alongside and the peat is loaded into the cars with a mechanical shovel.

The work must be done quickly, for the autumn is not lavish with sunshine in these northern parts. In rainy weather work is suspended.

There is another enemy the peat cutters have to guard against—wind. Here, as in a seaport, close watch is kept on the weather.

Seamen think nothing of an ordinary gale, they do not regard it as a storm; but in the

peat-field, work is suspended during a gale. Why? Because a spark from a tractor, or from an electric locomotive, may fall on the peat and cause a fire. As is known, even a damp peat bog catches fire. How much more so is this possible with dry, loose peat.

Watch-towers are posted in various parts of the plain where firemen keep a keen look-out. As soon as smoke is seen anywhere the alarm is given and the fire brigade rushes to the spot.

But let us return to the peat harvest gathered and taken from the field. Where is it taken to?

The freight train loaded with peat runs a few kilometres and pulls up at a five-storey factory building with many windows. The building vibrates with a continuous roar. Inside, stretching from the bottom to the top, are a number of drying-chambers like huge, round ovens.

The peat is beaten into a fine powder, sifted in huge sieves and then driven through all five drying-chambers by strong currents of air created by huge, roaring fans.

The peat entered the factory in the shape of a raw mass smelling of bog; seven minutes later it comes out in the shape of hard, smooth,

shining bricks, which, when tapped, give off the sound of wood.

Peat is an important item in the economy of the Estonian republic; in many cases it serves as a substitute for coal, and it has almost completely ousted firewood.

The peat bogs in Levassaare, Ellamaa and other places are also being worked in the mechanized way described above.

The bogs are disappearing, giving place to fertile fields.

YÕUDU TÖÖLE!

At the collective farms in Estonia—in the fields, in the stock-yard, or in the threshing yard—one often hears the traditional greeting: "Yõudu tööle!"

Never has this greeting, wishing one strength to work, sounded so confident and cheerful as it does today; for today the Estonian people possess mighty strenght to work. The age-long dream of dominating nature is coming true.

That mighty strength comes from the collective-farm system, which is transforming the Estonian country-side.

The type of poor peasant that existed in the past and is described by Stalin Prize winner H. Leberecht in his novel *Light in Koordi* is no longer to be seen. This is how Leberecht describes him:

"He was unprepossessing in appearance, was little Priidu, all gnarled, with knotted

toil-worn fingers, in work sandals and a shirt stained dark with sweat on the back, but Maali loved him as he was. He was good to her and the children. It wasn't his fault they hadn't grown rich after twenty years of married life. Snake Swamp was to blame for that. It swallowed up all Priidu's labours, engulfed in one year the ditches it had taken him two years to dig; the swamp grasses smothered the stunted oats—for Priidu had neither the strength nor means to manure the strips he had wrested with such toil from Snake Swamp.

"Now if an arterial canal were dug to drain off the stagnant black swamp waters, that huge marsh would dry up and the ground grow hard underfoot. Then you could put it to the plough. Why, there were scores and hundreds of hectares there that could be turned into ploughland if only the forces could be found to do it—what could he, Priidu, do all by himself?"

As long as the Estonian peasants worked individually, in bondage to the kulaks, they could not rid themselves of their poverty and they were helpless in their struggle against the elemental forces of nature.

The collective-farm system transformed Priidu into a giant.

To equip him with machines the Soviet government set up scores of machine and tractor stations and land reclamation stations. The network of these stations is constantly expanding and in 1955 the tractor operations performed at the collective farms by the machine and tractor stations will be five times more than in 1950. The collective farms are served by trench-digging machines, land-clearing machines, excavators for draining marshes, tractor-drawn ploughs and cultivators for tilling the soil, and by combines for harvesting the crops. They have at their service all the latest achievements of science.

For centuries the husbandman waged an unequal struggle against the marshes. In Estonia the marshes are as much a scourge as drought is in the south-eastern regions of the Soviet Union, but this scourge is now being eliminated. During the fifth five-year plan period, 180,000 hectares of marshland in Estonia will be drained and converted into fields, meadows and pastures.

By 1965—in the course of three five-year plan periods—all the marshes in Estonia will be drained and the republic will have acquired a million hectares of new land. The area of

field, meadow and pasture will have doubled. In fifteen years the people of Soviet Estonia will do what the Estonian people had not been able to do in many centuries.

Such is the plan for the transformation of nature that is now being carried out in the republic.

A collective offensive against the marshes has been launched all over the republic.

Draining marshes is a matter of vital interest for the entire people. It is the theme of songs, of symphonic poems and of paintings. The heroes who distinguish themselves in this work are famous throughout the republic. Among those heroes are excavator operators, collective-farm blacksmiths who have devised new implements for pulling up tree stumps, Stakhanovite workers and engineers in Tallinn who have invented a machine with which a wide trench five kilometres long can be dug in one day.

The execution of the plan for the transformation of nature is changing the face of the Estonian country-side. Take, for example, the village of Vardja. The marsh had sucked in the fields and had reached the very houses of the inhabitants. The people starved and suffered from rheumatism. The place is now

unrecognizable. The village seems to have been shifted to another spot.

With equal success the Estonian collective farmers are clearing their fields of boulders which in some places were a no lesser evil than the marsh. Large areas were bestrewn with them, some weighing hundreds of pounds. In the old days the individual peasants exhausted themselves in vain efforts to remove them. Today, however, a tractor hauls them away with the greatest ease.

For ages the soil of Estonia was regarded as poor. At many of the farms the average grain yield was 6-7 centners per hectare, and no more was expected. Today, however, crops of 20-25 centners per hectare are harvested on those same fields. In some places a yield of 35 centners of barley per hectare is obtained; a fantastic figure compared with the old standards. In those hayfields where formerly 10 centners of hay were mown, 30 and in some places even 40 centners are obtained.

Such is the effect of the collective-farm system.

Could an individual peasant in the old days put 300 kilogrammes of chemical fertilizer per hectare on to his field? Of course not. But that is the regular thing at the collective farms.

The soil of Estonia, including drained marshland, needs plenty of fertilizer. Peat does not contain all the substances required by cereals, fodder grass and vegetables. What is lacking must be supplied.

For example: drained marshland contains a great deal of acid. The soil needs lime, which, as is known, neutralizes acid. In bourgeois Estonia, however, very little lime fertilizer was manufactured. Why? Because it did not suit the interests of the British manufacturers who forced their goods upon Estonia. They did not make lime fertilizer, but some kind of powdered mineral which was not suitable for all soils. And certain "scientists" came along and, pandering to the foreigners, argued against the utilization of lime fertilizer.

That is an example of how the bourgeoisie distorted science and made it serve the interests of profiteers.

In Soviet Estonia science serves the people, and the people know more about it. The soils of the republic have been carefully studied. An excellent and cheap substance has been found for liming the soil, namely, shale ash, and plenty of this can be obtained from the furnaces of factories and electric power stations.

Many soils need phosphorus. There are phosphorous deposits in Estonia, and their exploitation and the manufacture of fertilizer are being organized. During the fifth five-year plan period the production of superphosphates will be organized.

Already, the amount of artificial fertilizer used in the fields is three times as much as was used in bourgeois Estonia.

To obtain a rich harvest it is not enough to fertilize the soil; it must also be well tilled. Scientists proved that in Estonia the soil must be ploughed not 20 centimetres deep, as was done hitherto, but 30 centimetres. By doing so it is possible to increase the crop by more than 30 per cent. That, however, would be beyond the strength of the individual peasant's horse. Tractors are needed to plough at such a depth; the collective farms obtain the use of these from the machine and tractor stations.

The collective farmers are breaking down the old farming traditions and standards.

In the past, the prevailing crops were rye, oats and barley. Now, one more and more often sees wheat, the cultivation of which in the Soviet Union is extending further and further northward. Wheat has now become one of the

principal crops in Estonia. A great deal was done to achieve this by the Soviet Michurin plant-breeders who have raised new varieties of frost-hardy wheat. In the south of the republic the cultivation of flax is spreading. And sugar beet too. Yes, sugar beet at 60° north latitude! Thousands of hectares of land are being assigned for this crop. Soon, the first sugar refinery in Estonia will be erected.

A considerable part of the drained marshland is converted into meadows and pastures; fodder grasses and root crops are planted. That is essential, for live-stock farming is one of the most important branches of agriculture in the republic.

There are now in Estonia 80 state live-stock farms for meat and dairy produce. These are advanced farms holding first place in the Soviet Union for average milk yield.

One often sees here black-and-white cows, which by force of habit are placed in the category of the Dutch breed. Actually, they are a new breed raised by Soviet experts. From the Dutch breed they have inherited a high milk yield, and from the local breed they have inherited a high fat content of milk and hardiness. The breeding of these animals is another achievement of Michurin science and of the

thousands of live-stock farmers who apply and develop that science in their practical work.

Agriculture in Estonia is growing at a rapid rate.

During the fifth five-year plan period the production of wheat and other cereals will be greatly increased. The number of cattle in the collective farms will increase about 75 per cent, and the number of pigs will be doubled. The average milk yield per cow will increase more than 60 per cent and reach 2,500-2,600 kilogrammes per annum. The number of cattle and pigs in the state farms will be more than doubled.

A MILLIONAIRE COLLECTIVE FARM

A SMOOTH, yellow sandy road runs up hill and down dale, through woods and across a dewy plain; on each side stretch collective-farm fields, some only recently laid out on drained marshland. Fields of golden grain give way to a long strip of fragrant clover, over which bees are buzzing. Then come big patches of alfalfa, which, like clover, is used for cattle feed.

We pass a bright green meadow and the bend of a river, dotted with water lilies and shaded by weeping willows, and enter a village. Here there are two or three low brick buildings, the remnants of the former landlord's farm, and a number of new buildings with drops of resin still glistening on the fresh logs and boarding.

We are at the centre of the Uus Elu (New Life) Collective Farm. Its members are recent individual homestead farmers.

The majority of the Estonian farmers had long been accustomed to live and work in their isolated homesteads, only rarely meeting and chatting with their neighbours. Sometimes a farmer would not see his neighbours for whole weeks. And alone he tilled his small plot by the primitive methods employed by his grandfather.

Today the peasants work collectively. In one go a tractor takes in the plots of a number of homesteads. The hedges that formerly marked the boundaries of the different plots have been torn down, the fields are far larger than they were before.

We can hear the water rushing over the dam of the electric power station on the river. Hundreds of small rivers, dotted with water lilies, are now harnessed like this in Estonia. At the end of the fourth five-year plan period there were fourteen times more rural electric power stations than in old Estonia.

This is Sunday. Two motor lorries are outside the garage and youths and girls in holiday attire climb into them. They are athletes, and they are going to take part in athletic contests at a neighbouring collective farm.

They are accompanied by more elderly "fans." The Estonians are fond of sports, and

of athletics in particular, and they are proud of their fellow-countryman Yaan Kotkas, who won the wrestling championship at the XV Olympic Games.

Near-by is the village recreation club from which come the sounds of female voices; the choir is rehearsing. The library is open; it has a stock of three thousand books. In the reading-room the members of the zootechnical circle are poring over their books, preparing for the next lesson.

Tomorrow we shall be able to go over the farm.

The chief wealth of the collective farm is its herd of cows. We can see them grazing in the meadow—the famous black-and-white cross-breeds. Their average milk yield per cow is 5,000 litres per annum.

They could be made to yield more. The Vyandra State Farm, for instance, gets a little under 7,500 litres per cow per annum. Scientists are working at that farm and the Live-Stock Institute has an experimental station there. It is not surprising, therefore, that the collective farmers pay close attention to what is being done there. Every now and again you hear the farmers say: "At Vyandra they advised us . . ." to do so and so.

The members of one collective farm visit other farms and take note of improvements and better methods. For example, they find that it is wrong to keep young calves shut up in the barn in the winter; they must be let out for an airing in all weather. And the barn must be kept cool; the youngsters will eat more then and grow more quickly, and they will not catch cold.

After such a visit a farmer will say: "I saw a young bull there, six weeks old, but he looked three or four months old."

The post brings magazines and pamphlets which describe the successes achieved in live-stock farming all over the Soviet Union.

The Uus Elu Collective Farm strives to keep pace with the rest. Electric current not only gives light, but also helps to cut up root crops for feed and to pump water into the cattle troughs.

Moreover, the motor drives cold water through a set of pipes in a device used for cooling milk to prevent it from turning. That device was invented by members of the farm, and it can cool one and a half tons of milk in an hour.

At a little distance from the cattle-yard there is a dairy where, in two whitewashed

rooms, people in white overalls receive the milk, separate the cream and beat it up in churns. There are hundreds of small butter factories like this in the republic; there is one in every collective and state farm. Estonian butter is valued in the Soviet Union on a par with Vologda and Siberian butter.

And the fatback, the excellent pork fatback, nine inches thick, they produce at the Uus Elu Collective Farm! The farmers have put a lot of work in their pig farm, but they are well rewarded for their efforts. Here, too, the old-fashioned methods have gone by the board. The Luunja State Farm, which is regarded as a model, decided to vary the diet for pigs: clover in the morning, the addition of more turnips in the afternoon, and potatoes in the evening. Well, why not do the same at the Uus Elu Collective Farm? They did so. And they also copied the time-table adhered to at the state farm, showing exactly to the minute when to feed the animals, when to clean them, when to prepare food for them, and so forth.

The Uus Elu Collective Farm also keeps sheep. Sheep rearing is wide-spread in Estonia, and long ago the sheep farmers bred a variety known as the "Estonian karakul," distinguished for its thick, curly wool. But

these sheep come nowhere near the genuine Central-Asian karakul sheep. The proposal was made to bring sheep from Central Asia and cross them with the local breed. A valuable proposal, and there was nothing to prevent it from being carried out. The barrier that separated Estonia from the vast Soviet Union had been removed. In torrid Uzbekistan the visitor from the far west was given a hearty welcome. The sheep were delivered and they have acclimatized themselves to their new habitation. The Estonian collective farmers have no doubt that their home-bred karakul will be improved.

There is something to show that will also interest horse-breeders. The horses at this farm are splendid. They are always entered for the annual cart-horse competitions, which are very popular in the republic. Here they reared the famous stallion Ukhur. When he was led out excitement spread among the spectators. Ukhur's sire had beaten many records. What form would the son show? Ukhur went along harnessed to a cart. Loaded sacks were piled on the cart, one after another. This was to go on until the horse stopped. Ukhur beat his sire's record, but still he kept on pulling lustily. The spectators rose to their feet, amazed

at the strength of that horse. At last Ukhur stopped and the umpire announced:

"Ten thousand and thirty kilogrammes."

A horse which can haul more than can be carried by three three-ton motor lorries! That is the kind of horses they breed at this collective farm.

This young collective farm has achieved success in every department. That is evident in the poultry-yard, in the orchard, in the golden wheat-fields, in fact, everywhere. The money income of the farm exceeds a million rubles per annum, and most of it comes from livestock.

The Uus Elu Collective Farm was one of the first collective farms in Estonia whose annual incomes exceeded a million rubles. Its organizers learned from the best collective farms in the fraternal republics; now they are teaching others.

ON THE ISLANDS

At night there was a storm. It did not rage long, the summer storms in the Baltic are short, but it left a trail in the shape of a thick fog, which the wind blew to the shore. Our boat was to have left before dawn, but it did not leave until after the sun was well up.

After a short run across the straits we land on Muhu Island. Muhu is that part of the Moonsundi Archipelago which is nearest to the mainland. Continuing our journey, we gaze with curiosity at this island part of Estonia. There is so much that is curious here: the sandy, pebbly soil, which in some places is bestrewn with pieces of grey limestone; juniper bushes stand out in dark green patches against the vacant ground covered with coarse, pale grass; moss-grown boulders, barely distinguishable from the bushes; a dry plain gives way to a bog, beyond which there is a

patch of arable land, and near it there is a village.

Cottages thatched with reeds; stone fences; clumps of apple-, pear- and plum-trees. Fishing nets hanging to dry. A small windmill.

A haycart comes towards us. On it is a woman knitting a mitten out of coloured wool dyed with a home-made dye. The island women are always to be seen knitting, at home or away from it.

Our motor bus drives down the sloping shore to the beach from which a dam extends across the strait.

We ride across the dam and reach Saaremaa Island.

Dense woods and wide bogs stretch in the middle of the island, the largest in the Moonsundi Archipelago. The shore, for the most part, is low and covered with scrub and low pine.

At a little distance from the road there is the mysterious Saaremaa "crater," which has attracted the attention of many geographers. This is how it is described by the Russian traveller A. A. Blagoveshchensky, who visited this island at the end of the last century.

"Very remarkable on the island is an eminence, at the top of which there is a deep

funnel-like depression in the form of a crater. The eminence rises 25-30 feet above the surrounding country. Its sides are covered with woods; at the bottom of the crater a lake is visible. In former times the lake was so deep that it was deemed immeasurable."

How was this "crater" formed?

If volcanic lava were found in the vicinity the answer would be obvious, but Blagoveshchensky did not find anything like it here, nor could he have done so. Unable to solve the riddle, he wrote:

"Nature seems to have departed from its rules in order to create something quite special and extraordinary."

Many researchers racked their brains over the riddle of this "crater" and it remained unsolved until attention was drawn to pieces of smelted iron lying around near the hill. These were found to be pieces of meteoric iron.

The crater was formed by a huge meteorite. It dropped and was shattered here, churning up thousands of tons of earth.

The meteorite exposed a layer of limestone. This rock, formed by accumulations of seashells, and which, as we know, accompanies the shale on the mainland, lies beneath the

soil all over Estonia. Rain and thaw water washed away the limestone exposed by the meteorite, and that is how the lake was formed at the bottom of the crater.

We end our journey at Kuressaare, the biggest town on Saaremaa and in the whole archipelago.

"The little town in a snuff-box," as the Russian writer N. S. Leskov called Kuressaare, is a cosy little place submerged in greenery. In a shady grove stands the Kingisepp Museum, the house in which V. Kingisepp lived in his schooldays. The luxuriant gardens and white buildings give the town a southern appearance. On the shore, surrounded by earthworks, stands an ancient castle built six hundred years ago.

In the castle there have remained the dungeons in which the German knights incarcerated rebellious Estonians, and also the pen into which condemned prisoners were cast to be torn to pieces by wild animals.

A steep staircase leads to the top of the tower.

From here we see long, narrow spurs jutting into the sea, and it looks as though the land is dragging itself out of the water. Between the

spurs we see the ruffled water of the shallow bays dotted with rocks.

Far out, at the very end of a cape, we see the masts of motor sailing-boats. These shallow-draught boats are indispensable here. The sea is too shallow here for ships to anchor at the wharf, but these boats can do so easily. In fact, they are the principal means of communication with the mainland; they sail from island to island, delivering mail and freight.

On the horizon we see dots of land. Those are the "laidi," as the Estonians call the tiny, low islands which cling to the coast in hundreds. Most of them are uninhabited; they are visited only by hunters and by haymakers who carry away the hay in boats. On some of the islands one or two houses may be seen.

There are multitudes of sea birds in these parts. A shrieking sea-gull is soaring over the water, looking out for prey—small fish, which are its principal food. But sea-gulls are not averse to robbing other birds' nests of their eggs and young. They build their own nests far away from human habitation, in the fissures of rocks, or on mounds hidden by reeds. The male and female take turns in hatching the eggs. When the female is on the

nest, the male stands on guard near-by to protect it from enemies.

The reeds on the sea-shore are inhabited by pochards, kinsmen of the wild duck. They are smaller than the latter, and their heads and necks are of a bright reddish colour. When pursuing fish, they can swim for about ten metres under water.

Equally agile is the guillemot, a bird about the size of a pigeon, with the meaty body of the duck and the graceful head of the sea-gull. It is so accustomed to the sea that even in the winter it rarely flies to the shore, but day after day swims and dives in the icy water in the noisy company of its fellows. In the summer the flock breaks up into couples who build their nests on the rocks.

Sometimes birds from very remote countries visit the Estonian islands. Several times flamingos, inhabitants of the Nile, were seen here.

The Baltic lies in the path of some Arctic birds which migrate to Italy and to the south of France for the winter.

The hunter finds game on these islands all the year round. In the winter seals come out on the ice; there are several varieties of this animal in the Baltic.

Hunters go out to an ice-floe in a boat, draw the boat on to the ice, and with the aid of dogs track down the seals lying on the snow. Seal hunting is a real Arctic expedition. It lasts a week, sometimes two. The hunters make long marches over the frozen sea, hauling their boats, which are placed on runners. If their stock of food gives out they eat seal flesh.

THE PATH OF THE BRAVE

In calm weather the sea in the bays and straits between the "laidi" is quiet and caressing, but sailors must always be on the look-out.

The Baltic is changeable and perfidious.

The men who charted the sea-lanes through the Moonsundi Archipelago met with much danger and privation.

In ancient times the sea here was ploughed by the fighting ships of the Estonians who more than once intercepted invaders and inflicted severe defeat upon them. "Their greatest strength is in the ships," wrote a German chronicler about the Est warriors who were armed with bows and arrows and with clubs made of tough juniper wood.

The merchants of Great Novgorod sailed their ships past the islands.

The victorious fleet of Peter the First was at first obliged to use the Swedish charts and surveys, but they were obsolete. To correct them Peter sent an expedition to the Baltic

under the command of General Lyuberasov, but soon his charts ceased to be of use. Navigation officers made the following entry in their logs: "The reefs indicated on the chart do not exist."

What had become of the reefs? Why did the chart of the Moonsundi Archipelago have to be revised so often? The chief reason was that the winding and interwinding currents between the islands shifted masses of sand from one place to another. In one place the reefs were covered with sand and a new island arose; in another place the sand-bank was washed away.

In 1748, Russian sailors, Midshipman Pleshcheyev and pilots Smirny and Karpov, began to make the first detailed survey of the entire Russian coast of the Baltic, the gulfs and islands. The work took three years. More than once they risked their lives when exploring the sand-banks and submerged rocks in the Estonian straits. The islanders assisted the hydrographers. The expedition's log contains the following entry: "The inhabitants showed Pilot Smirny the sand-bank on which two merchant ships were wrecked."

In 1805 that log was continued by Admiral Sarychev. One day he nearly lost his life off Saaremaa. In his journal he wrote:

"Soon we felt that the rudder had touched bottom, and then came three blows which knocked it off its hinges and it was washed away. Without a rudder we were unable to steer the vessel and put out to sea. A north wind was driving us towards the shore, so we decided, as a last resort, to drop anchor, in order to avoid shipwreck. But even with three anchors out we continued to drift, so I ordered the top-mast, on which the torn and flapping sail was greatly resisting the wind, to be cut away."

Had they failed to stop the vessel it would have been driven on to the rocks and dashed to pieces.

The work of Sarychev and of his predecessors was not in vain. It proved useful for the final charting of the Baltic Sea and for the protection of the coast.

The Moonsundi islands, and particularly Saaremaa, lying at the entrance to the Gulf of Riga, are of great importance for the Soviet Union. It is not surprising that foreign foes more than once tried to seize these vital approaches to the Baltic region.

During the Crimean War of 1853-1856, an Anglo-French fleet appeared here.

During the first world war fierce battles were fought here against German warships.

The Hitler invaders frantically clung to the islands in the autumn of 1944, when the Soviet forces, in stubborn battles, were liberating the Baltic. The enemy's resistance was particularly fierce when fighting with his back to the sea on the narrow Sõrve Peninsula, in the southern extremity of Saaremaa.

The Soviet people remember the heroes who distinguished themselves in those battles. Scout Stepanov led a company into the enemy's rear and delivered a surprise attack. Sabalak Orazlimov, a Kazakh, obstructed the embrasure of an enemy machine-gun emplacement with his body: he was killed, but he stopped the enemy's fire which was holding up the advance. Petrosyan, an Armenian, single-handed stopped a squad of fascists who were about to set fire to an Estonian village and killed seven of them. The Estonian Rebane, in command of a detachment that was surrounded by Germans, unhesitatingly radioed a message to our artillery: "Open fire on me." Under cover of volleys of Soviet artillery he led his men in an attack and routed a large force of fascists.

Thus, in the flames of the struggle for

freedom the friendship between the Estonian people and the other peoples of the Soviet Union was sealed with blood.

The valiant deeds performed by the liberating Soviet Army are recorded by the exhibits in the museum set up in the vaulted halls of the old castle in Kuressaare.

The museum also illustrates the peaceful labour of the inhabitants of the islands and the advantages of the new way of life.

In bourgeois Estonia the islands were the poorest and most backward part of the country. Particularly hard was the life of the common people. The land on the islands is poorer than on the mainland and is encumbered with boulders; hence, the crops were poorer. The children were sent to the mainland to slave for the kulaks for many years. Many never returned.

The poverty of the islanders became proverbial and was the subject of folk-tales. One of these is about three brother giants. One lived on Saaremaa, the second on Hiiumaa, and the third on Muhu, and they had only one wooden plough between them. At ploughing time they would throw the plough to each other across the straits.

The sea, too, provided a meagre livelihood, although it is rich in fish. The fishing industry

was profitable only for the kulaks who owned fishing-boats and tackle.

That was the case in the past.

At the present time nature itself on the islands is being transformed. The marshes are being drained, the boulders are being removed, and the soil is receiving fertilizers. Only now, when the soil of the islands is being made fertile, is it possible to obtain the benefits of the mild climate and to convert the archipelago into flourishing orchards. It is well known that the islands are the only place in Estonia where the best varieties of apples and plums grow, where melons reach full, red ripeness, and where ripe alfalfa seed is obtained.

The prospects for the cultivation of sugar beet are promising.

The day is not far distant when the islands will supply the mainland with fruits and plants which are rare, or completely absent, in the republic today.

A great change has taken place in the life of the fishing villages on the island coasts, for the inhabitants now have the means of exploiting the riches of the sea. Like the husbandmen of the soil, the fishing folk are also organized in "collective farms" and collectively own fishing-boats and tackle.

AMONG THE FISHERMEN

In the forecastle of a fishing-boat, where the floor is carpeted with sheepskins, and where coats, a lantern and a double-barreled hunting rifle hanging on the wall swing backward and forward in rhythm with the rocking of the waves, there is a cylindrical tin case containing a blue-print. The plan on the blue-print reminds one of the plan indicating the various fields of a collective farm. But this is a plan of the sea, indicating the places where, according to the information of experts, the fish shoals are most likely to be found. Each "field" bears the name of the collective fishery to which it has been allocated.

The captain unrolls the blue-print and plots the course of the next voyage. That depends on the season.

The spring is the season for sprats, which at this time pour in from the wide spaces of the Baltic to the sun-warmed shallows to

spawn. Their favourite spawning places are the Gulf of Riga and the waters off the islands.

The end of the summer is kilka season. These fish are like sprats, but smaller.

The autumn is the season for eels, the most peculiar of the inhabitants of the Baltic. Long and slender, they look like snakes, and are as slippery. No wonder there is the saying: "as slippery as an eel." Although not much to look at, their meat is tasty and nutritious; it contains 20 to 25 per cent of oil.

Off the coast of Estonia there are also cod, plaice, pike, perch, and valuable fish like whiting and salmon.

The collective fisheries are well equipped. In the past, motor boats were rare. Now, however, every fishing-boat is fitted with a motor.

The boats are larger and hold twice and three times as much as the old boats. Formerly, only ordinary nets were used; now they use sweep-nets of the latest types.

And today, nobody is satisfied with whatever falls to the net. They send out scouts to find the fish they want.

The methods of fishing are as varied as the habits of the different kinds of fish. Plaice, for example, keep to the sea-bed and have to be caught with drag-nets. To catch eels, one must

resort to cunning. Twelve conical nets are placed loosely one into the other. Eleven of the cones have the tips cut off. An eel gets into the first cone, wriggles through the aperture into the second, and then into the third, and so on, until it reaches the whole one and is held there.

Sprats are caught by means of a combination of nets and floating barrels.

The operation is a sight not forgotten for a long time. The fishermen go out in two boats to the square plot marked on the blue-print. Along the sides of this plot they place empty barrels from which are suspended weighted nets which reach to the sea-bed, thus forming a sort of pen with a narrow opening. The sea is calm and tender blue, as is usually the case in May. At night the sprats come in swarms and collide with the net wall half a kilometre long. Searching for a way of escape they reach the opening and dash through it, those behind pressing on those in front. The fishermen posted in their boats at each side of the opening pull the ends together and the fish are trapped. They are then scooped into the boats.

Until recent years this type of net was not known in the Baltic, but it has long been in use in the Pacific. The fishermen in the Soviet Far

East introduced it to their brothers in the Soviet far west and taught them how to use it. Since then the catch has increased year after year. On the average, the Estonian fishermen now take from the sea two and a half times more fish than they took before the war.

The fifth five-year plan provides for an increase in the Estonian fish catch of 85 per cent by the end of 1955. A state base for year-round fishing is to be established in Pärnu, with sub-bases on the islands Saaremaa and Hiiumaa and new motor boat fishing stations are to be set up.

A large part of the catch is processed locally, at the collective fisheries, which have salting and smoking sheds. Most of it, however, goes to the state canning plants that have been put up in the Soviet period.

The Estonian fish-canneries turn out millions of cans of fish every year. They not only supply the Estonian republic, but ship their products to all parts of the Soviet Union. The Tallinn fish-canners turn out delicious canned sprats. The fish are pickled and spiced with pepper, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg and other spices, sixteen in all, and all in strict proportions.

The canneries also deliver fresh fish, which is temporarily kept in ice-houses, where the ice is covered with layers of peat and sawdust and is thus prevented from melting throughout the whole summer.

The fishermen will tell you, if you ask them, that earnings amounting to twenty thousand rubles per summer season are not rare among them. To this must be added their earnings from winter ice-fishing and seal hunting. Nor is this all.

The collective fisheries also have live-stock farms and vegetable gardens, and they even grow grain. City people are surprised to see cabbage and cucumbers brought to market by fishwives. In the old days the fisherfolk were themselves obliged to buy all the food products they needed except fish.

The toilers of the sea are growing more prosperous year after year.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

UNDER the Soviet system the cultural life of Estonia is flourishing as it had never done before.

In a letter they addressed to J. V. Stalin, the Estonian people wrote:

"Under the rule of the bourgeoisie, science and all the treasures of culture were within the reach only of the wealthy and the privileged classes. Only under Soviet rule has culture become genuine people's culture, within the reach of the broad masses."

Let us look into an Estonian school-room where fair-haired, blue-eyed children are sitting at their desks. A wide road has opened before them. There is nothing to prevent them from acquiring education. In the old days, instead of being sent to school the children of poor parents were sent to the kulaks or factory-owners to slave for a crust of bread.

In parliament, the representatives of the money-bags would deliver speeches like this:

"Let those who have money receive education. There is no need to help the poor to get education."

In the opinion of the bourgeois rulers of Estonia, ignorant people could be more easily held in subjection. The money they assigned for public education was so little that often there was not enough to buy blackboards for the schools, and the children wrote on the log wall with chalk.

In bourgeois Estonia 42 per cent of the children did not finish even primary school.

In Soviet Estonia today, compulsory, free, elementary education is the rule. Everywhere, in town and country, and in every mining and fishing village, you see spacious, well-equipped schools. In the first four years after the war a hundred and eleven new schools were opened in the republic.

The number of children attending technical schools is now four and a half times more than in bourgeois Estonia. One often hears a working-man or collective farmer say that his son or daughter is going to be an engineer, or a school-teacher, a doctor, or an agronomist.

As is the case throughout the Soviet Union, it is difficult to find a person who is not studying at an institute, technical school, or at special courses. People are mastering the technique of production and Stakhanovite methods of work.

Never in the history of Estonia has there been such a desire for knowledge as there is now, and never did the people read so much as they are reading now.

Since Soviet rule was established, 1,224 libraries have been opened, having on their shelves a total of over two million books.

All the achievements of science are within the reach of the people, and the working people themselves are helping to promote science. Hundreds of young scientists have come from the ranks of the workers and peasants and are working in the numerous scientific institutes in the republic. At the head of these institutes is the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian S.S.R., which was set up after Soviet rule was established, and which directly controls a large number of research institutes.

Wide prospects for the further development of the culture of the Estonian people are opened by the fifth five-year plan. The network of cultural, educational and scientific institutions

in the country will be considerably enlarged. In Tallinn, the capital of the republic, and in all the regional centres, the transition from universal elementary (seven-year) to universal secondary (ten-year) education will be completed, and the conditions will be created for the transition to universal secondary education in all the other towns and villages in Estonia in the next five-year plan period.

Everywhere, in the capital and on the remotest island, at the university and in every village reading-room, the people are studying the works of Lenin and Stalin.

The rulers of bourgeois Estonia feared communist ideas more than they feared the devil, and they prohibited the reading of Marxist literature on pain of severe punishment. Today, these books are available to everybody. They have been published in the Estonian language in large editions; and the great ideas of Marxism-Leninism inspire the working people and are guiding them, together with all the peoples of the Soviet Union, to the glorious heights of communism.

Only now, under Soviet rule, can the Estonian people read the works of Pushkin and Turgenev, of Gogol and Nekrasov in the original and in their native language; only now

are the works of Mayakovsky, Sholokhov, Fadeyev, Ehrenburg, and of many other Soviet writers being published in the Estonian language; for the bourgeois masters of Estonia did all in their power to fence off the country from Russia and prevented the publication of the Russian classics and of Soviet literature.

In bourgeois Estonia literature was in a very depressed state. All obstacles were placed in the way of progressive writers who came out in defence of the working people, and rarely could their works find a publisher.

The rich demanded that literature should serve and amuse them.

One day a very queer book appeared in the book-shops of Tallinn. It could be read only by the man who wrote and published it. He was a rich crank who out of sheer idleness took it into his head to publish his own works in the gipsy language. He did this for his own amusement at a time when thousands of Estonian children lacked the most essential school-books and remained semi-literate, and even entirely illiterate.

All the publishing houses were owned by capitalists. The working people yearned for good books, but these publishers thrust upon

them filthy trash, which lauded exploitation, the rule of oppressors and predatory war.

Artists, too, were dependent on the tastes and patronage of the rich. They would hang their pictures in one of the restaurants in Tallinn in the hope that some rich man would take a fancy to them. Many artists and musicians left Estonia to try their luck abroad, but they soon became convinced that in the big capitalist countries—the United States of America, Germany and England—the opportunities for creative artistic work were as limited as in little Estonia.

Where capital rules, there is no scope for the artistic talent of the people.

But what immense scope for that talent there is under Soviet rule! How many gifted writers, artists and musicians have come to the front in Soviet Estonia!

Full freedom of speech was found by August Jakobson. He began to write in the 20's. He described the sufferings of the common working people, to which he himself belonged, and the cruelty of the idle classes, but efforts were continuously made to silence him. He lived to see the happy days of Soviet rule, and his plays *Life in the Citadel* and *The Fight Without a Front-Line*, written after the Great

Patriotic War, have been performed at many theatres in the Soviet Union, and have received high public appreciation. August Jakobson has been twice awarded a Stalin Prize.

Millions of Soviet people have seen the coloured film *Light in Koordi,* showing how the collective-farm system triumphed in Estonia. It is based on the novel bearing that title, written by the young Estonian writer Hans Leberecht, a Stalin Prize winner.

The cinema studio now functioning in Tallinn came into being under Soviet rule.

Let us step into the "Estonia" Theatre, the beautiful building, standing in the centre of the capital of the republic. On its stage come to life again the heroes of *St. George's Night,* the revolt of the Estonian people against the German barons. It is now giving the opera *Fires of Vengeance,* the first Soviet Estonian opera, composed by Eugen Kapp, Stalin Prize winner. He, too, composed the music for the ballet *Kalevipoeg.*

The artistic talent of the people is vividly displayed by amateur art, which is extremely popular throughout the country. The favourite form of that art is choir singing.

There is not a collective farm, a factory or a school at which there is not a choir, or even

several choirs. They are in constant friendly rivalry at concerts, at district song festivals, and once in three years at the Republican Song Festival in Tallinn.

The Republican Song Festival is a big, colourful and thrilling event in the life of Soviet Estonia.

People of all ages and all occupations from towns and villages, from shale- and peat-fields and from lumber camps, from all parts of the republic, come to Tallinn for the festival in fishing-boats, steamships, in the toy-like trains of narrow-gauge railways, in express trains, in collective-farm lorries, and by the passenger air-lines from Saaremaa and Hiiumaa.

From the railway stations, landing stages and from the high-roads the participants in the festival, gaily dressed in national costume, stream into Tallinn. Cars are parked in the narrow streets, through which pours a human flood. The air rings with laughter, song and general merry-making. One wonders what has become of the customary Estonian staidness and reserve!

Tens of thousands stream through Kadriorg Park to Song Field, a sort of stadium in which musical festivals are held.

Songs old and new are sung.

Songs of grief and anger tell of the hard life of the people in the past.

The new songs tell of the life of freedom and happiness of the present day, of work for the common good, of the great family of Soviet nations, an equal member of which the Estonian people have become.

Professional composers render amateur art every assistance. They write the scores for the best of the folk-songs and compose music for the amateur choirs and orchestras.

The choirs also sing the songs of the fraternal Union republics, the songs of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, the Caucasus and Karelia.

Among the items on the programme of the festival are performances by reciters of folklore. They recite not only the ancient fables, but also poems composed in the ancient style about the new life the Estonian people are leading today.

Singers and reciters are accompanied by musicians playing violins, mandolins, balalaikas (triangular banjos) and the "torupill," the Estonian bagpipes.

The orchestra strikes up a dance tune and dancers occupy the arena. Most often they dance the merry "tulyak" and the polka.

The dancers from the islands dance the fisherman's dance called the "kalamas," which is like a musical game.

During such a festival a handicraft exhibition is organized. Conspicuous among the exhibits are knitted articles: jackets, mittens and wide, many-cornered berets, embroidered with crosses and rhombuses interspersed with the wild flowers in the Estonian fields: cornflower, daisy and blue-bell. The patterns are similar to those used in North-Russian embroidery. Leather articles—beautifully embossed purses, hand-bags and book-marks—are ornamented with the same patterns.

In the republic there are also excellent wood-carvers. In common use in ancient Estonia were ornamented wooden bowls and platters, carved with knife and chisel. The present-day handicraftsman has at his command about a hundred chisels of different shapes and sizes, with which he does really beautiful work, as is evident from the exhibits.

In accordance with tradition, the Song Festival ends with a performance by a massed choir. All the choirs participating in the festival line up in a semi-circle in the arena. Among them are grey-bearded fishermen with weather-beaten faces, blue-eyed Young Pio-

neers, textile girls, burly miners from the shale fields, students, engineers, and Stakhanovites from factory and field.

Their costumes are gay with all the colours of the rainbow. The men—some in long kaftans and hats, others in short jackets, coloured knee-breeches and white stockings. The women in sleeveless coats over embroidered knitted jackets, some wearing a high head-dress and others wearing embroidered kerchiefs on their heads. By their little, round, spangled caps and red-and-green striped skirts one can tell the fisherwomen from Kihnu Island, hidden in the Gulf of Riga; and by the ornate patterns on their embroidered jackets one can tell the singing women from Muhu Island. The girls from Saaremaa are distinguished by their bright blue corsages and snow-white blouses; and the girls from south-east Estonia by the silver ornaments on their breasts. Every district of the republic has its own cut of dress and its favourite ornaments, and all are represented at this festival, in this vast, multi-coloured choir.

A magnificent song bursts forth.

Its strains rise high above the field, above the trees in the park, and float far and wide, to the towers of the ancient fort on the grey

rocky hill, to the ships in the harbour, and beyond Tallinn. It seems as though the entire nation is singing with the voice of this choir of thirty thousand.

It is a magnificent song of a free people in praise of the great multi-national Soviet country in which the most daring and most noble dreams of mankind are coming true.

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